



**French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
 Minutes from the TCC Hybrid Meeting on February 13th, 2025

**Minutes**

**ATTENDANCE:**

In-person and remote via Zoom:

Steve Williams	NCDOT Division 14
Vicki Eastland	Land of Sky RPO
William High (Chair)	Buncombe County
Chloe Donohoe	Buncombe Co Transit
Jessica Morriss	ART
Mike Malecek	Town of Mills River
Daniel Sellers	NCDOT TPD
Jodie Ferguson	Haywood County
Hannah Smith	NCDOT Div 13
Lucy Crown	City of Asheville
Sam Cullen	Town of Maggie Valley
Nathan Bennet	Town of Mars Hill
Pat Christie	Village of Flat Rock
Harry Buckner	Town of Biltmore Forest

**Members Without Representation Present:**

Madison County
Town of Clyde
Town of Canton
Haywood Transit
Town of Laurel Park
City of Hendersonville
Town of Montreat
Town of Weaverville

Additional Attendees:

Tristan Winkler	Sandy Broadwell	Hannah Bagli
Daisy O'Connor	Ada McGovern	Christina Harris
Joel Strickland	Erica Anderson	Lauren Blackburn
Nathan Moneyham	Russel Cate	Rachel Bronson

## WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Chair William High called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone at 11:02AM. A quorum was established to conduct the business before the meeting.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

William High opened the floor for public comment. No comments were heard.

## Consent Agenda:

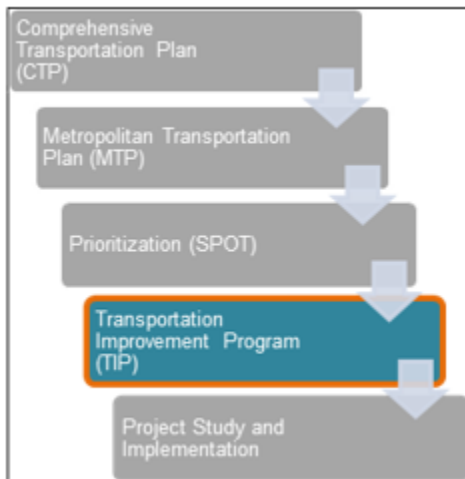
### 3A: January 2025 Meeting Minutes:

[https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025\\_01\\_09\\_DRAFT.MPO\\_TCC\\_Minutes.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025_01_09_DRAFT.MPO_TCC_Minutes.pdf)

*Steve Williams moved to accept the consent agenda including the minutes from the January 2025 Meeting. Jessica Morriss seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.*

## Business:

### 4A. Amendments to the 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program



#### What is the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is our region's document that reflects planned transportation investments over a ten-year period. The TIP describes each project, a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated costs. Current items are for modification of existing projects.

## Amendments Summary

We have a significant number of Amendments this month. Some changes include:

- The segmentation of A-0010AA into A-0010AB, AC, AD, AE, AF, AG, AJ, and AK. After the segmentation, the original A-0010AA project will be deleted.
- Multiple transit amendments including programming funds for 5311 and 5310 capital projects, replacement vehicles, and transit routine maintenance.
- U-5019B is being reopened after previously being closed out in 2022. This is the French Broad River West Greenway managed by the City of Asheville. This would allow Asheville to invoice the MPO for \$700,000 of previously unobligated funds.

TIP Amendment Summaries can be found here: <https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/FebruaryTIPAmendments.pdf>

Discussion did not occur.

**Steve Williams moved to recommend the adoption of the amendments to the TIP to the board. Sam Cullen seconded the motion and it passed upon a roll call vote.**

#### 4B. Safety Targets

Since 2016, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established five highway safety performance measures in accord with regulations set forth in the Federal MAP-21 and FAST Act transportation funding bills. These performance measures are:

1. Number of fatalities;
2. Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled;
3. Number of serious injuries;
4. Rate of serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled; and
5. Number of combined non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries.

These targets are established annually, are based on five-year rolling averages, and are for calendar years. North Carolina state targets are set in agreement with our Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) goals. The SHSP goals are developed through collaborative efforts of a diverse group of stakeholders including state, regional, and local partners (including MPOs). The goal of the most recent (2019) SHSP is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by half by 2035, moving towards zero by 2050.

State safety performance targets for 2025 were submitted to FHWA on August 31st, as required, with the submission of the annual Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) report. These targets reflect the 2019 SHSP goal to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by half by 2035, moving towards zero by 2050. The calculated targets are shown in the table below.

The following table from NCDOT shows the MPO Planning Area’s past safety record compared to CY 2022 Targets:

*Table 2: French Broad River MPO Safety Performance Target Achievement Determination Summary for CY 2022*

Performance Measures	5-year Rolling Averages			Target Achieved?	(Actual) Better than Baseline?	Met or Made Significant Progress?
	Target	Actual	Baseline			
	2018 - 2022	2018 - 2022	2016 - 2020			
Fatalities (5 Year Average)	45.4	51.0	49.8	No	No	No
Fatality Rate (5 Year Average)	0.912	1.030	1.008	No	No	
Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	108.3	138.0	129.4	No	No	
Serious Injury Rate (5 Year Average)	2.151	2.786	2.613	No	No	
Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	15.7	19.8	19.6	No	No	

The next table from NCDOT shows the proposed target for CY 2025 with the MPO Planning Area’s past safety record for reference:

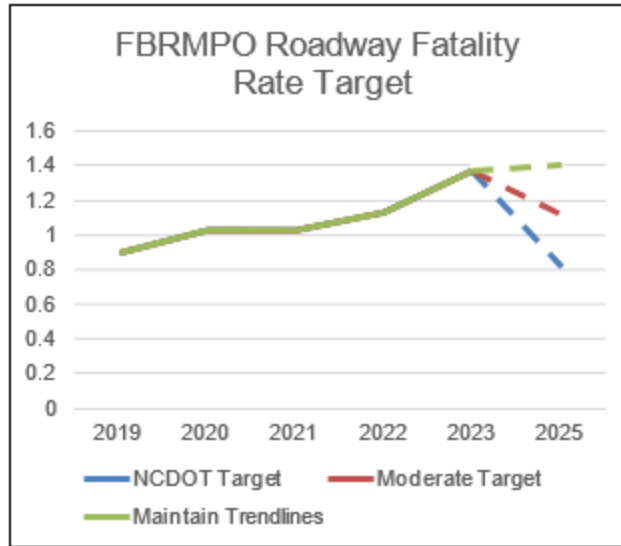
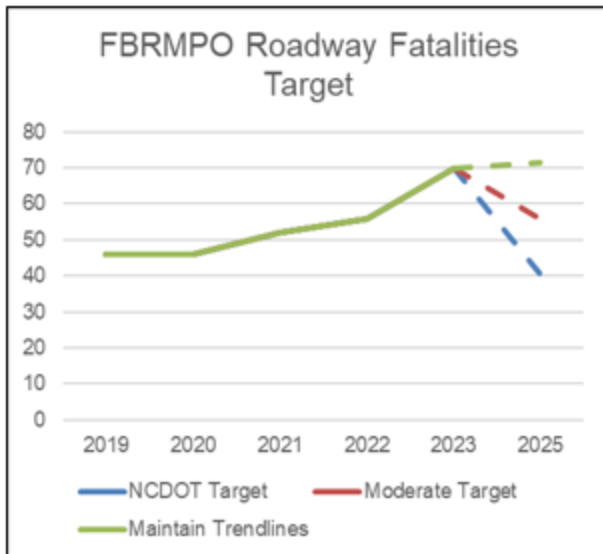
Table 4: French Broad River MPO Specific Safety Performance Targets

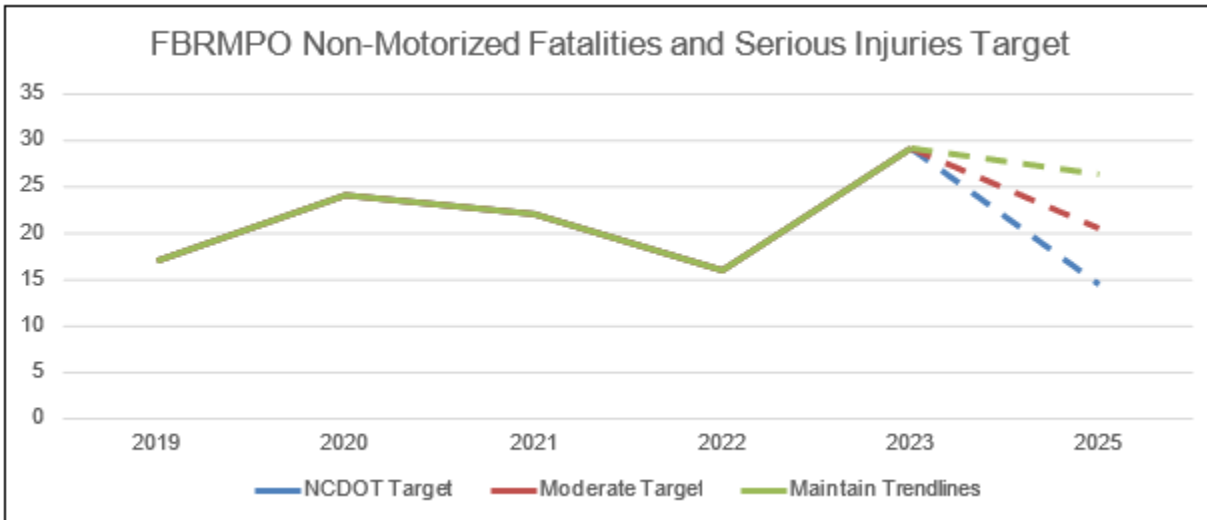
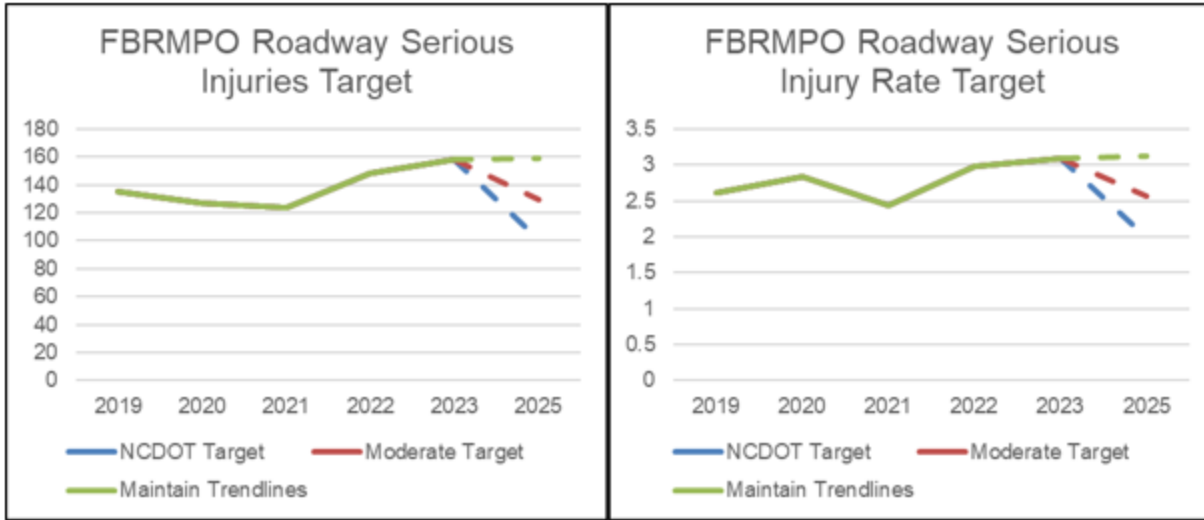
Year	Fatalities (5 Year Average)	Fatality Rate (5 Year Average)	Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)	Serious Injury Rate (5 Year Average)	Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (5 Year Average)
2008 - 2012	44.0	1.000	113.4	2.578	16.4
2009 - 2013	45.0	1.012	101.6	2.289	15.6
2010 - 2014	46.8	1.042	89.4	1.999	15.6
2011 - 2015	46.8	1.030	81.6	1.805	15.6
2012 - 2016	46.2	0.997	74.2	1.602	16.2
2013 - 2017	50.2	1.056	84.6	1.755	15.4
2014 - 2018	52.4	1.080	102.2	2.071	17.6
2015 - 2019	51.2	1.033	117.6	2.343	18.2
2016 - 2020	49.8	1.008	129.4	2.613	19.6
2017 - 2021	50.8	1.018	137.6	2.759	20.4
2018 - 2022	51.0	1.030	138.0	2.786	19.8
2019 - 2023	54.0	1.088	138.4	2.793	21.6
<b>2025 Target*</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>0.810</b>	<b>100.8</b>	<b>1.997</b>	<b>14.5</b>

Based on the discussion with the MPO Board in January, MPO staff is providing three scenarios for the TCC & Board to choose from:

1. Adopt NCDOT Targets
2. Moderate Targets (Median between NCDOT Targets & Maintaining Trendlines)
3. Maintain Trendlines

	Fatalities	Fatality Rate	Serious Injuries	Serious Injury Rate	Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries
<b>NCDOT Target</b>	40.6	0.81	100.8	1.997	14.5
<b>Moderate Target</b>	56	1.108	129.7	2.561	20.5
<b>Maintain Trendlines</b>	71.4	1.406	158.5	3.124	26.4





Discussion occurred around maintaining doesn't seem like a right route to go. Discussion around procedure of tracking if we move away from state target. Reporting responsibilities can be burdensome on MPO staff but NCDOT would help and take on the reporting responsibilities should we change our targets.

**William High moved to recommend to the board to keep the state targets. Steve Williams seconded the motion which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.**

**5A. Safe Streets for WNC Plan Update:**

Safe Streets for WNC is a safety action plan funded through the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) discretionary grant program through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The SS4A grant program supports USDOT and their goal of zero roadway deaths using the Safe Systems Approach. The French Broad River MPO and Land of Sky RPO hired VHB and began the plan in 2024. We held stakeholder engagement in the Summer of 2024. Due to Hurricane Helene, we encountered project delays in public engagement but are proceeding with an abbreviated public

engagement as we continue the plan. Lauren Blackburn from VHB is here to provide the TCC with an update on the Safe Streets for WNC plan and milestones moving forward.

Information Only.

Presented by Lauren Blackburn

Discussion did not occur.

## 5B. I-26 Connector Optimization and Refinement Update I -26 Connector (I-2513) Update:

### What is the I-26 Connector?

The I-26 Connector (I-2513) is a highway project in Buncombe County that aims to provide improvements to I-26, I-240, and parts of I-40. The project is split into several different sections (generally described below):

**Section AA-** Pavement rehabilitation on I-40 from roughly Sand Hill Road to Monte Vista Road. (STIP Status: Funded)

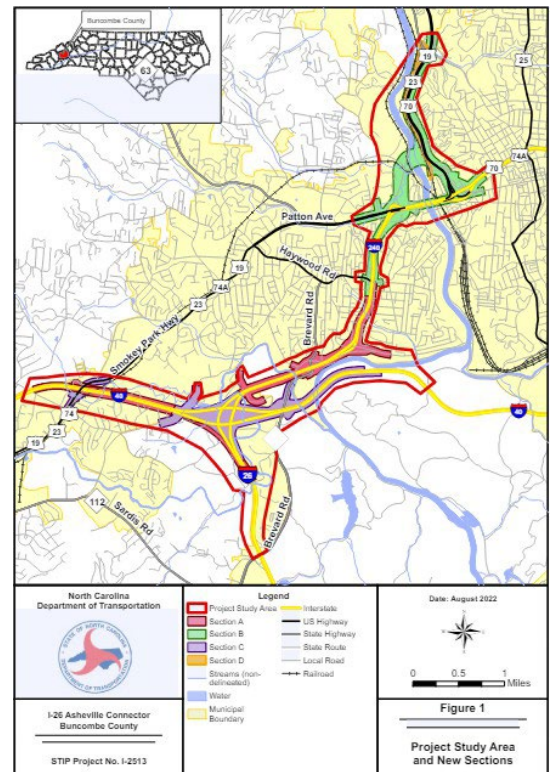
**Section AB-** I-26/I-40 AND I-40/US 19/23 (SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY) INTERCHANGES. CONSTRUCT THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS: WIDEN I-40 EASTBOUND TO I-26 EASTBOUND RAMP, WIDEN I-26 WESTBOUND BETWEEN I-40 RAMPS, CONSTRUCT NEW I-40 WESTBOUND TO US 19/23 (SMOKEY PARK HIGHWAY) NORTHBOUND RAMP. (STIP Status: Funded)

**Section AC-** Widen I-26/I-240 from I-40 to Haywood Road (STIP Status: Funded) **Section B-** Highway Widening and New Bridge Construction over the French Broad River from Haywood Road to Broadway Avenue. (STIP Status: Funded)

**Section C-** Final Improvements to the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. (STIP Status: NOT Funded)

**Section D-** modernization and complete streets improvements to Riverside Drive (STIP Status: Funded)

The project also includes additional improvements that have been requested by the City of Asheville, including multimodal infrastructure and aesthetic enhancements.



## Update

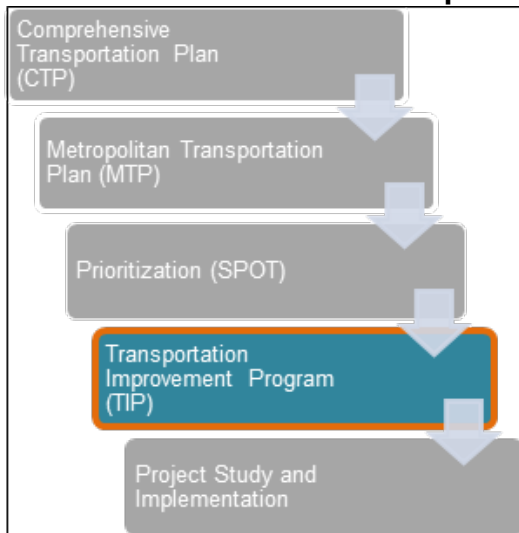
Sections B & D went to bid in early, 2024 for design-build, however, all the bids came in over the cost estimate of the project. NCDOT has been working on a process known as Optimization & Refinement with the contractor to reduce costs of the project. The Optimization & Refinement process has completed and has reduced costs enough to move the project forward.

To present on the changes made as part of the Optimization & Refinement process, Nathan Moneyham, NCDOT Division 13 Construction Engineer, will provide an update.

Information Only.

Discussion did not occur.

## 5C. Draft 2026-2035 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)



### What is the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)?

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is North Carolina's document that reflects planned transportation investments over a ten-year period. The STIP describes each project, a schedule for implementation, funding sources, and estimated costs. The STIP includes all of the MPO's TIPs as well as programs for RPOs.

### Development of the 2026-2035 State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The cycle to update the STIP for 2026-2035 began in fall 2023. Due to rising costs for existing projects funded in the currently adopted 2024-2033 STIP, little to no funding was projected to be available for new projects in the 2026-2035

STIP. While P 7.0 was completed, few projects across the State were funded and none in the French Broad River MPO. Instead, the primary focus was on right-sizing NCDOT's budget and delaying or cutting existing projects due to cost increases.

### Projects Being Decommited

Project	Route	County	Funding Tier	Revised Cost
U-4712	US 23B (South Main Street) Widening	Haywood	Division 14	\$57,400,000
U-6159	US 276 (Russ Avenue) Access Management	Haywood	Division 14	\$39,000,000
U-6158	US 276 @ Crymes Cove Intersection Improvements	Haywood	Division 14	\$6,700,000
U-2801AB	US 25A (Sweeten Creek Road) Widening	Buncombe	Region G	\$215,000,000
U-5832	NC 81 (Swannanoa River Road) Widening	Buncombe	Division 13	\$145,000,000
U-6047	NC 112 (Sand Hill/Sardis Road) Widening	Buncombe	Division 13	\$175,800,000
I-4400BA	I-26 @ US 64 Interchange Improvements	Henderson	Division 14	\$143,600,000

\*A-0010AA decommitted (officially) but previously brought before the MPO Board

### Project Delays & Construction Schedules

Project	Route	County	Previous CST Year	Updated CST Year
A-0010AE	Future I-26 (near New Stock Road)	Buncombe	2031	2031
I-2513AC	I-26/I-240	Buncombe	2025	2027
I-2513B & I-2513D	I-26/I-240	Buncombe	2024	2024
I-4409	I-40 @ Blue Ridge Road	Buncombe	2025	2026
I-4759	I-40 @ Liberty Road	Buncombe	2027	2029
U-4739	Amboy/Meadow Road	Buncombe	2030	2030
U-5834	Mills Gap Road	Buncombe	2025	2026



U-6163	Mills Gap Road @ Cane Creek Road	Buncombe	2025	2025
R-5921	US 276 (Jonathan Creek Road)	Haywood	2024	2025
U-6048	US 19/23	Haywood	2030	2033
R-2588B	NC 191	Henderson	2026	2029
U-5783	US 64	Henderson	2025	2025
U-5886	White Street	Henderson	2027	2028
U-6049	NC 225 (South Main Street)	Henderson	2027	2028

**Next Steps**

Action	Date
Draft STIP Released	January 31, 2025
Division 13/14 Public Meetings	February 24-28 (Drop-In at Division HQ)
Public Comments Due	April 4, 2025
NC BOT Adoption	June, 2025
FBRMPO Adoption	August, 2025

Information Only.

Discussion occurred around that decommitted for div 14 means they are still in stip for design projects but they are not funded for construction projects.

**5D. 2050 Socio-Economic Projections Update**

As part of the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the MPO develops what’s referred to as the “Preferred Growth Scenario” that determines how much growth the region should be planning to accommodate in 2050, what kind of growth is expected (in terms of demographics and business type), and where that growth is expected to go. This information feeds into the region’s Travel Demand Model, which is used to develop traffic projections to determine future transportation needs. Outputs from the model are used to build Purpose & Need Statements for future projects as well as a starting point for the development of traffic forecasts that NCDOT uses to determine roadway needs for projects.

The French Broad River MPO has hired Manhan Group to develop four different growth scenarios for the region for the Board to consider:

1. **Business as Usual**- growth would be dictated by a combination of comprehensive plans

- and market forces with the general intent that growth patterns would not change significantly based on current patterns and comprehensive plans. Growth total: NC OSBM
2. **Consolidated Growth**- growth would be more focused in more walkable areas (WalkUPs), areas with lower VMT/HH, and/or generally more developed areas. The intent would be to focus more growth in areas more conducive to shorter trips and densify urban areas beyond what is likely in current plans and UDOs. Growth Total: NC OSBM
  3. **Dispersed Growth**- growth would be more focused in areas with lower densities in order to avoid densification of the region beyond what is currently in comprehensive plans. Growth Total: NC OSBM
  4. **Accelerated Growth**- growth rates would exceed current projections with the hopes of accommodating additional housing and avoiding becoming a region being heavily-reliant on its working-age population being outside of the region as well as alleviating housing price pressures. Growth Total: Custom

MPO Staff will provide an overview of the study, why it's important, and what decision point is coming to the TCC and Board soon.

Information Only.

Discussion on highest growing areas seeing more bmt. We should look into if its related to development being pushed into rural neighborhoods.

## 6A. Division Project Updates

**Division 13:** [https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Division13\\_February2025Updates.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Division13_February2025Updates.pdf)

**Division 14 :** [https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Division14\\_February2025Updates.pdf](https://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Division14_February2025Updates.pdf)

## 6B. TPD Updates:

## 6C. FHWA/FTA Updates :

FHWA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Website: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>

FTA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Website: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/BIL>

## 6D. Committee & Workgroup Updates

## Committee & Workgroup Updates

**Prioritization Subcommittee**— met on February 5<sup>th</sup>; next meeting March 5<sup>th</sup>.

- Draft STIP
- Elevate 2050 Updates
- 2050 Socio-Economic Growth Scenarios

**5307 Subrecipient Workgroup**- met on November; next meeting February 18<sup>th</sup>

Points of Business/Discussion:

- o TIP/STIP Updates Needed
- o Potential Changes to the 5307 Subrecipient Formula

**Hellbender Trail Stakeholder Group/Regional Trail Forum Updates**- met on April 23<sup>rd</sup>; next meeting TBD.

## MPO Studies Status

Study	Managing Entity	Year Programmed	Status
2050 Socio-Economic Projections	FBRMPO	2024	Underway
CTP/MTP Update	FBRMPO	2024	Underway
Safe Streets for All Regional Action Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Underway
Patton Avenue Corridor Study	City of Asheville	2023	Underway
Woodfin-Weaverville Greenway Study	Town of Woodfin	2025	Underway
Buncombe County Pedestrian Plan	Buncombe County	2025	Consultant Selected
Hellbender Implementation Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Regional ITS Plan	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Travel Survey/Model Upgrades	FBRMPO	2024	Not Started
Staffing & Compensation Study	LOSRC	2024	Not Started

\*\* See agenda for more Locally Administered Projects.

## 6E. Legislative Updates

To be updated

## PUBLIC COMMENT

William High opened the floor for public comment.

## ADJOURNMENT

William High adjourned the meeting at 1:08PM as there was no further business.

